

## WOODMAN SPARE THE TREES.

The carnivorous plant occupies a good deal of interest among the scientific of late years, and among the many curious facts to be known about trees is one that few probably are aware of. One of these is that some trees collect bones. It is on record that a Captain Maclear, who was in command of the Alert, having heard of a tree that picked bones up, inquired from the resident magistrate of Thursday Island if he would give him some information about the tree. Mr. Chester, the magistrate, answered as follows: "The tree grows at Marbiac, not far from Pearson's Station. It is a kind of banyan, or fig tree, and sends down long vines, or tendrils (roots), from its upper branches. These run along the ground, and twine around any small obstacles in their path, such as bones and other unconsidered trifles. The vines afterward contract, and draw up whatever is attached to them."

Much speculation has been indulged in, at various times, as to the length of time during which trees of particular kinds may live; but anything like an absolutely accurate estimate is obviously impossible. Approximation to exact knowledge is all that can be obtained. The cedar has been known to live 2,000 years; the cypress, 800; the elm, 300; the ivy, 335; the larch, 576; the lime, 1,100; the maple, 516; the oak, 1,500; the olive, 800; the orange, 630; the oriental, 1,000; the spruce, 1,200; the walnut, 900; and the yew, 3,200. Many instances may, of course, be given of presumably greater ages, but not, we think, upon any reliable evidence. The existing cedars of Lebanon, for instance, are supposed to be contemporaries of those cut down by Solomon for the building of the Temple. This theory, however, is not, and cannot be, put forward on absolutely tenable grounds. But whatever facts may be proved, or, rather, however forcible reasons for the suggested age of a tree may be in a particular case, it may be regarded only as an exception to a rule. The figures indicated will, at least, furnish an idea of the comparative longevity of different trees.

Some people have a mania for cutting trees and pruning them into all kinds of hideous shapes, as well as cutting off large branches close to the trunk, an act which much disfigures the tree, and should never be done without absolute need. It is an old-fashioned fallacy, built upon scientific ignorance, which condemns the proximity of trees to dwellings as unwholesome. As a matter of clear fact, they promote the health of all that surrounds them.

The combination of carbon and oxygen, known as carbonic acid gas, respired by animal lungs, deleterious as it is to animal life, rejoices the trees, for they breathe in this gas, assimilate the carbon of the compound to build up their substance, and give back to the air the health giving oxygen.

Before uprooting trees, it may be well to bear the above fact in mind, and also, as regards pruning, to remember that large limbs cut close to the trunk often result in killing the tree. Opinions differ as to the advisability of cutting off live branches, but with large healthy trees much lopping off of heavy branches is considered injurious.—[Ex.]

## AN EMPRESS IN THE HAREM.

BERLIN, Nov. 3.—The Empress has taken a peep at the harem of the Sultan, and had a chat with the seven recognized wives of the Sublime Porte. The several dozen of left-handed wives in the Sultan's harem were excluded from the interview. The incidents of this visit, when they are given out, will be read with great interest.

The daughter of the Turkish Minister at Rome and the daughter of Musir Astin Pasha, both of whom speak French, attended the Empress. A gorgeous kaiz, propelled by ten oarsmen, conveyed her to the entrance to the harem gardens. The walls of the cabins of the kaiz are covered mirrors. The furniture is finished in blue velvet and gold. The oarsmen wore garments of white silk with gold embroideries. The Sultan, attended by Kishlars, chief of the eunuchs, received the Empress on disembarking and conducted her to the entrance to the Seraglio, where he left her after introducing his mother, the Sultana Valide. The seven recognized wives of the Sultan, all mothers of princes, attended by Godalique suites, received the Empress in the grand saloon. The other women of the harem were excluded. The visit lasted three hours. A musical entertainment was given, during which coffee was served. The Empress then made a tour of the apartments and grounds.

At the banquet Empress Augusta Victoria sat on the right of the Sultan and Emperor William on his left. The Sultan conversed in an animated manner with his guests. The dinner service was of gold.

The Catholic Centennial celebration in Baltimore is a very imposing and important affair. It is, in fact, a triple celebration in honor of the hundredth anniversary of the appointment of the first American bishop, the first congress of Catholic laymen, and the dedication of the national Catholic University at Baltimore. The two cardinals and the leading bishops of the Catholic Church in America are present and a host of priests and laymen from all parts of the United States and Canada. Baltimore has always been the central citadel of Catholicism in the New World.

## AN OPEN LETTER.

The reading and answering of letters from unknown correspondents occupies a large part of the time of every busy author; and every appreciative one must wish that he had more to give to it. The impulse to pour one's heart to a stranger may seem more or less perplexing, according to our temperaments or tempers; but it is too powerful an impulse to be crushed, and often too pathetic not to be respected. An instance of this kind has recently disturbed me very much. I trust the friendliness of the Independent to help me out with a difficulty which will be readily understood when I say that I received, some time ago, from a stranger, a letter which, by every canon of Christian courtesy, should have been answered, and that I have lost the letter. With it, of course, having gone the stranger's address, I have no choice but to communicate with her, "if haply I may find her," through the public press, or leave her to form her own opinions of the religion and manners of her selected confidante.

I choose the former course without apology, for the reason that the case is one of far more than usual interest, and reaches quite beyond the personal relations. I cannot be mistaken in assuming that the readers of the Independent will follow it with intellectual respect and quickened consciences.

The letter was dated, I think, from the City of Washington, and ran somewhat to this effect:

"My dear Madame—I beg your pardon for troubling you with the private affairs of a stranger, but I am in rare need of advice from some one whom I trust to understand my motives. I feel sure that you will be patient with my intrusion and I will tell you as briefly as possible why I make it."

"I wish to go to the Sandwich Islands and take upon myself the mission from which death recently received Father Damien."

"I am not a Roman Catholic, but I am a Christian, and my heart turns to this work. I think I have counted the cost, and know what I am about to do, if I undertake it. I am ready for it, if it is best to take the step."

"I may add that I am entirely alone in the world, without near claim upon me of any kind. My aged parents have died. I took care of them to the end, and am now without home or kin."

"I can refer you to So and So, of such a place, if you wish to know anything about my antecedents or character, and I have friends in — and — who can tell you what they think of my fitness for such a mission."

"I greatly desire your opinion, if you are willing to give it to me, of the wisdom and rightness of such a step. Will you, can you counsel me?"

"I shall be grateful for your reply, and am Yours, very truly, —"

I was moved by this letter; and time, aided by the consciousness of carelessness, has not weakened the impression made by its tremendous moral purpose.

The world is becoming familiar now with the tragedy of Father Damien's sublime life; almost too familiar.

But here is one of ourselves; a person such as one may see any day, a solitary, thoughtful woman like hundreds of others whom the isolation of life leads to soul-sweetness rather than soul's bitterness. With a modesty and simplicity which go far to testify to the reality of her purpose she elects the Via Dolorosa of modern mission as quietly as another woman may decide to go to Paris or to study the violin.

Being, as I say, much moved by the letter of this noble woman, I mentioned it to a friend, who added emotion to emotion by the following prompt reply:

"Are you, then, so much surprised? Why I know another just such case. I have heard of still another. But of one I can testify, for it is the case of a personal friend. She is an artist, well-known and well-gifted. She has a brilliant career before her. She came to be last winter and said she wished to follow the mission of Father Damien. I told her not to go. I thought it a misdirection of gifts."

Direction or misdirection, who shall say? for the soul of another is a dark road. Every story has its own solemn plot, wrought by the hand of the great Author. We are but miserable proof-readers, after all, when we try to guide the heart of our nearest and dearest. What bunglers at the life of a stranger!

What should I say to her who asked of me the bread of womanly, sisterly interest, and has received perforce the stone of silence? If her eyes ever fall upon these columns she may know that what I say before the world is, indeed, only what I could have said in the seclusion of a private letter: "You noble woman, I do not know! I respect you. I revere you. I humbly pray Heaven for the title of your self-oblation, for the shadow of your Christianity—but whether you ought to go to Molokai and become a leper I do not know!"

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.  
—[N. Y. Independent.]

At a meeting of the sub-committee on the site of the World's Fair in New York, a resolution was adopted that no part of Central Park should be used. This, it is supposed, will remove the only cause for local opposition to the fair, and guarantee a sum which is expected now to increase with great speed.

## SUGGESTIONS TO THE PAN-AMERICAN CONGRESS.

A short time ago the Philadelphia Board of Exchange received a letter from Secretary of State James G. Blaine requesting that body to offer suggestions respecting proposed subjects for consideration by the International American Congress which will shortly resume its session in Washington, after a tour through the country. In compliance with this request the Exchange has forwarded to the Secretary of State a number of suggestions, among them being a declaration in favor of free raw materials, and another protesting against the payment of bounties or subsidies to either steamship or sailing lines.

The resolutions are as follows: Whereas the Secretary of State has requested the commercial bodies of Philadelphia to offer suggestions respecting the subjects proposed for consideration by the International American Congress to be held in Washington during the month of October, 1889; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Commercial Exchange of Philadelphia respectfully offers the following suggestions:

The establishment of direct telegraphic communication with all the export centres of South America.

The establishment of banks of commerce in all the American countries with the assistance of their respective Governments that direct means of exchange may be secured.

The admission into this country of all raw or manufactured material absolutely free of duty from said countries, no matter whether such material be intended for direct consumption for food, or for use in the arts and sciences or for subsequent manufacture. Provided reciprocal action is taken by said Governments touching our goods imported into their ports.

The establishment of uniform port charges, classification and valuations of merchandise, and as far as practicable of commercial reciprocity.

The universal establishment by the South American countries of our system of weights and measures, if any change at all is made in the present system. The Exchange, however, is of opinion that were trade once firmly established immaterial measures of this kind would easily adjust themselves.

The establishment in its entirety of our system of patent law; the creation of some method of arbitrating, without European interference, of any difficulties or differences that might arise, and the extradition of criminals for other than political offenses, are all subjects for consideration.

The completion of the Nicaragua Canal and the guarantee of its control, free from European interference, would be of incalculable benefit.

We unhesitatingly condemn the payment of bounties or subsidies to either steamship or sailing lines, other than the proper and generous compensation for carrying the mail; but recommend the relief of vessels engaged in the trade from all charges as far as practicable, and the allowance of Americans to buy foreign bottoms and sail them in foreign only, under the American flag; and the establishment of direct rapid communications between the several interested countries for the conveyance of mails, passengers and goods.—[Phil. Record.]

## Advertisements.

Chas. Brewer & Co.'s  
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Pipes made by this establishment, riveted by

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Finest Assortment

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Public Hall, Church, Boarding School, Hospital, Dwelling where a good force of water is obtainable should be provided with one or more

"Paragon" Hose Reels

With 100 feet Hose, which is one of the best protections against fires.

By actual experiments water can be turned on, 100 ft. Eureka Mill Hose pulled off, and a stream put on a fire in thirty seconds.

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Testimonial.

E. S. Babcock, Jr., President of the Hotel del Coronado that has 85 Reels, each with 100 feet 1 1/4 inch Hose, writes the following under date of Sept. 14, 1889: "We take pleasure in certifying that at the recent fire in connection with the laundry of the Hotel some 6 'Paragon Hose Reels' were in use for several hours under a pressure of 100 lbs. and both Reels and Hose stood the strain with perfect ease."

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And it will have about 200 octavo pages descriptive of the Scenes and Scenery of the Group. The work is to be illustrated, and will contain from twelve to fifteen full page illustrations of Buildings and Island Scenery. It will also have a beautifully illuminated cover.

As the circulation of this work will be world-wide, among tourists and travelers, it furnishes one of the best mediums for advertising that has ever been offered to the business men of these islands.

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